

Report and Recommendations of the Joint Committee on Workplace Climate

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**Submitted to Janice Deakin (Provost & Vice-President, Academic) and
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Introduction

The climate of a workplace arises from the contributions and participation of every member, union and management alike, and the responsibility for creating and maintaining a healthy and supportive climate therefore belongs to all. The purpose of the Joint Committee on Workplace Climate (JCWC) was to “undertake a review of workplace climate issues pertaining to UWOFAs-LA Members and the Employer, and to propose and implement agreed upon recommendations to improve the workplace climate for Western’s Librarians and Archivists” (see Letter of Understanding for Workplace Climate, Appendix A). The focus of this report is therefore not on how problems came to exist but rather on how they might best be resolved.

Committee process

The JCWC was struck according to the provisions of the Letter of Understanding “Workplace Climate” within 60 days of the ratification of the 2011-2015 Librarian-Archivist Collective Agreement. It was chaired by Alan Weedon, Vice Provost (APPF). Its members were:

Lise Doucette	Research and Instructional Librarian, Taylor Library (elected by UWOFAs-LA)
Andrew Fuller	Director, Learning and Development Services (appointed by Employer)
Bruce Fyfe	Research and Instructional Librarian, Weldon Library (elected by UWOFAs-LA)
Pam McKenzie	Assistant Dean Research, FIMS (appointed by Employer)
Michele Parkin	Director of Faculty Relations (appointed by Employer)
Jennifer Robinson	Communications and Outreach Librarian, Western Libraries (elected by UWOFAs-LA)

Administrative support was provided by Anna Blonski and Heather Skilling from the Vice Provost’s office, and by Micki Izzard and Jane Laforge from UWOFAs.

The Committee met 15 times from January to May 2012, for a total of 25 hours: January 12, February 3, February 8, February 17, February 27, March 8, April 9, April 13, April 23, May 1, May 10, May 14, May 22, May 25, and May 29. In addition, members spent a significant amount of time working independently or in small groups to prepare for meetings.

The JCWC engaged the services of the Centre for Conflict Resolution International Ltd. (CCR) to conduct focus groups and interviews, provide climate analysis, and make recommendations. The JCWC met with the facilitators to provide some background on

the local context and suggestions for formulating the interview questions. Interviews took place during the weeks of March 5 and March 12, with 36 Librarians/Archivists (UWOFA-LA Members) and six Libraries Administration at Western members taking part. CCR facilitated three focus groups with Librarians/Archivists during the week of March 12. CCR submitted their confidential report by April 30 and also reported their findings in person to the JCWC.

In accordance with Article 9 of the Letter of Understanding, the Committee has carefully considered all issues raised by those interviewed pertaining to Workplace Climate as reported by CCR, including, but not limited to, concerns related to annual performance evaluation and assessment and workload issues.

Structure of this report

In this report, the JCWC describes the consultation process and presents results and recommendations. The report is the result of much discussion among the committee members. The consultations produced rich and wide-ranging findings and it has been a challenge to distill them into a single concise report.

This report contains three sections. The first is this introduction, which describes the JCWC process as mandated by the Letter of Understanding. The second section presents the facets of workplace culture addressed by CCR in the consultation process. The third section presents the JCWC's recommendations. In many cases, an individual recommendation will address several of the facets discussed in the second section. Because implementing these recommendations is essential to developing and sustaining a healthy workplace climate, recommendations for implementation are also presented.

Definitions

The term "Library Administration" in this report refers to the Executive Group who is responsible for Western Libraries' planning, priority setting, fiscal management, staffing and optimization of Western Library services. This includes the University Librarian, Associate University Librarian, the University Archivist, the Assistant University Librarian (Allyn and Betty Taylor Library), the Assistant University Librarian (The D.B. Weldon Library), the Assistant University Librarian (Information Resources and Access) and the Director of Administrative Services.

The term "Library Management" includes "Library Administration," above, plus the Directors of the C.B. Bud Johnston "Business" Library, Education Library, John and Dotsa Bitove Family Law Library, and Music Library; the Heads of Research and Instructional Services at the Allyn and Betty Taylor Library and The D.B. Weldon Library; and the Head of Metadata Access.

The terms "Librarians" and "Archivists" refer to Members of the UWOFA-LA bargaining unit.

Results from Consultation Process

Although the remainder of the report addresses challenges identified in the consultation process, it is important to begin with a recognition that the consultation also revealed several positive aspects of workplace climate. Librarians and Archivists are incredibly proud of the work that they do and of Western's collections and services. They receive immense personal gratification in helping students, faculty and other library and archive users and want, above all, to be helpful and useful. The University Librarian is well-informed and knowledgeable about individual Librarians and Archivists and the contributions they make. She is passionate about her work. Interviewees generally indicated a willingness to work with the University Librarian to resolve workplace issues.

It is important to note that the report focuses heavily on workplace climate within Western Libraries. This focus reflects both the preponderance of Western Libraries Members in the UWOFA-LA bargaining unit and the general overall satisfaction of non-Western Libraries Librarians with their workplace climate.

It is also important to note that many of the identified challenges are not unique to Western. Changes to information seekers' use of technology has led to disruptive change in the roles and work environments of librarians and archivists across North America.

Finally, the consultants' findings were consistent with issues noted in previous reports (e.g., Western Libraries Organizational Culture Report 2003, Western Libraries Self-study 2004 and 2009, Report of the Review Committee for the Western Libraries, 2010). Most respondents expressed a sincere desire for improvement in the workplace climate and believed this was possible. However, a significant number expressed the concern that these issues have been raised before but not addressed. Many fear that a sense of defeatism and futility will result if the current process fails to improve workplace climate. The report therefore concludes with a clear plan for implementation of the recommendations, including the development of an implementation committee and mechanisms for assessing progress. The JCWC recommends that implementation be attended to with urgency.

We summarize the facets of workplace culture addressed by CCR in the consultation process. Each subsection begins with a brief description of the facet and how it ideally contributes to a healthy workplace. A shaded text box then summarizes the results of the consultations relating to this facet.

Organizational Structure

Organizational structure (how things are organized and how things work) contributes to personal and organizational productivity. When employees understand how the organization is structured and how it operates, the employees are empowered to work constructively within that environment. When the organizational structure is efficient and smooth running, a minimum of time is lost when focusing on the organization's core business.

Most of the respondents reported that the organizational structure is clear to them and that it allows them the independence and autonomy to do their work as they see fit. However, there is lack of clarity regarding specific roles and responsibilities of leaders at all levels within the organization.

Leadership

Leadership is an integral part of the effectiveness of an organization. When leadership is encouraged, when leadership is responsive, when leadership is consistent, there is a positive impact on all employees. Positive leadership results in productivity, involvement, and commitment within the organization.

Much blame for a negative workplace climate has been placed, rightly or wrongly, at the feet of leadership. It is important to note that at various times respondents used the word *leadership* to refer to leaders at all levels, including the University Librarian, Western Libraries Administration, Western Libraries Management, UWOFA Executive, and the UWOFA-LA negotiating team. Confidence in all leaders has been reduced. Concerns about leadership therefore need to be attended to by all.

Librarian/Archivist respondents characterized leadership as reactive rather than proactive, and as not looking for long-term solutions nor interested in creative ideas or models. They are uncertain whether their best interests are being taken care of by their leaders. There is a level of distrust of leaders' actions, motives, and reasoning and a lack of clarity around how decisions are made and information is communicated. Respondents complained of delayed and drawn out decision-making.

Leaders themselves thought they were doing well because they were not receiving feedback to the contrary. They did not in all cases seek feedback but neither did Librarians/Archivists always provide it when invited to. Discrepancies between the leaders' understanding of their own roles and their reports' and colleagues' understandings of their role led to mismatches in expectations.

Organizational Goals and Values

Clear organizational goals and values can inspire employee performance. By clearly communicating organizational goals and values, the organization is confirming the value of the individual employee's contribution and how their work supports the organization's goals. Clearly articulated goals engage and motivate employees thereby enhancing the organization's ability to achieve its goals. When organizational goals and values are not articulated the result is a lack of focus, lack of motivation, and disengaged employees.

The majority of Librarians/Archivists stated that organizational goals and values are not clearly articulated. Although there is a vision statement for the organization, most people who participated in the assessment process are unaware of it. Therefore, there is a sense that day-to-day work is completed in a sort of vacuum, devoid of any relation to overall mandate, vision, direction, or goals of the organization. It is important to note that the vast majority of the respondents stated that they are proud of their own contribution to the organization and want to do more to contribute to long range and long term organizational goals. However, Librarians/Archivists and Library Management are unable to articulate the vision or strategic plan in ways that address the changing academic library environment.

Employee Satisfaction

Employees who are satisfied and positive about their work environment care about the quality of their work, are committed to the organization, are more productive, and are more likely to stay with the organization for longer periods. Job satisfaction is a highly motivating factor and critical to organizational success.

It is evident from those interviewed that individual Librarians and Archivists are incredibly proud of the work that they do and receive immense personal gratification in helping students, faculty and other library users. Yet these same people expressed dissatisfaction with how they are being led and are uncertain if their best interests are being taken care of by the leadership at all levels. The issues seem most concerning for Librarians within Western Libraries. Archivists report that the University Archivist's decision to relocate his office has resulted in more opportunity for informal communication and thereby in an improved climate. Librarians outside of Western Libraries seem happy and indicate they feel respected by their Faculties.

Policies and Procedures

The policies and procedures of an organization are the vehicles by which organizational goals are achieved. When policies and procedures become cumbersome, confusing, and time-consuming, employees may lose sight of long-term goals and objectives. Policies and procedures that aid in the smooth running of the organization and enhance

the employees' ability to do their jobs are widely embraced and maintained by employees.

There is an overarching clarity regarding policies and procedures that pertain to day-to-day activities of Librarians/Archivists. On the other hand, there is a high level of confusion and lack of clarity regarding policies and procedures that pertain to issues such as committees, Promotions and Continuing Appointments, assignments, personal evaluations, and general accountability.

For example, many people interviewed said that they did not understand the criteria for selection to be on a committee, the roles of different people within the committee, the decision-making power of the committee, the role of the committee leader, and ultimately, what happens to decisions, recommendation, and conclusions of the committee. Many interviewed expressed frustration over the promotion process, especially regarding the length of time the process takes.

Communication

The ability to get information to the people who require it in a timely manner is a determining factor in an organization's ability to deliver on its mandate. When employees operate with limited information and without clear lines of communication (with both colleagues and supervisors) the quality of the employees' work is compromised. Clear and frequent communication and information sharing keeps all employees in the loop and enhances motivation.

Communication is one of the overarching challenges of Western Libraries - both in terms of quantity and quality. There is a lack of quality communication between and among Library Management at all levels and Librarians/Archivists, in both directions. While everyone seemingly believes that it is needed and wanted, there is little evidence that the necessary effort is being put forth.

Librarians and Archivists desire dialogue and a role in addressing the challenges libraries and archives are facing, but feel they have not been engaged. Many people feel that their input is not sought, is sought after a decision has been made, or that the input given doesn't matter. For example, many noted that there was no feedback loop built into the committee structure and no feedback or acknowledgement on how one's work on a committee has ultimately contributed to Western Libraries.

Reportedly, there is a significant reliance on email and electronic correspondence for communication throughout the organization. While this form of communication is certainly a valid one, it also provides significant opportunity for missed messages, misunderstood messages, and a general sense of disconnection. When it is the primary or only mode of communication it results in a reduced sense of cohesion and teamwork. Many who were interviewed reported that almost all of the

communication they ever have with Library Administration is done via email.

Many of those interviewed stated that there seems to be an overall lack of awareness, knowledge, or interest in what has been accomplished by certain individuals/ groups/ committees in this organization on the part of Library Administration as well as colleagues. This makes it very difficult for people to celebrate successes or, in fact, to know when and what is appropriate to celebrate.

Conflict Management

All organizations experience conflict and not all of it is unhealthy. Conflict is unhealthy when employees are distracted and unable to work together. If employees are not empowered to manage conflict effectively, unresolved conflicts will continue to fester and may paralyze the organization. Clear conflict management procedures and individual training in conflict management techniques will assist employees, and the organization as a whole, in maintaining its focus on organizational goals and objectives.

The majority of respondents stated that people within Western Libraries do not strive to manage conflict effectively and that Library Management is rarely seen as acting to identify and diffuse potential conflict situations. As well, Librarians and Archivists themselves do not feel overly motivated, nor capable, to address conflict issues in the workplace either with each other or Library Management. This conflict avoidance is evident at all levels and impacts relationships and communications between and among Library Administrators, Librarians/Archivists, and UWOFA-LA.

There is a clear preference for focusing on the positive instead of dealing with underlying issues that may be causing strife and discomfort for everyone. This culture of conflict avoidance, along with the lack of engagement mentioned above, has led to distrust, gossip and frustration with unresolved issues. Failure to resolve issues leads to blaming and issues being personalized.

There is no evidence of ill-will. People want a healthy workplace but are uncomfortable raising and dealing with issues productively. It can be difficult to obtain effective engagement with a conflict-averse group, and it is essential that all take ownership in addressing this problem.

Change Management

Change is a reality within the workplace today. Change, however, can be stressful and demoralizing to employees when it is not managed in a positive manner. When employees understand the rationale of change, and when their contribution to the organization and the change process is valued, employees are more receptive to change and the positive potential within the organization.

Everyone interviewed in this assessment process recognized that Western Libraries (as well as libraries in general) are in a time of change. Yet the vast majority of people seem to be in a state of paralysis in dealing with this change. There is clearly a feeling of anxiety amongst most Librarians and Archivists regarding the personal ramifications of this change on their future. Without dialogue, productive resolution of conflict, and active participation by all, Western Libraries will be unable to build a climate which supports healthy engagement and change.

Roles and Responsibilities

When individuals are clearly aware of their responsibilities and what is expected of them, they are more successful and productive in their jobs. Lack of clarity results in duplication of work or gaps in work and can be debilitating to the effectiveness of the organization.

The overwhelming majority of Librarians/Archivists stated that they understand their own responsibilities and that their work is important to the organization. However, there was evident confusion regarding the roles and responsibilities of those in Library Management, as well as of colleagues within the organization, which produces unrealistic and inaccurate expectations of those roles.

The roles and responsibilities of Library and Archival Assistants in their work with Librarians/Archivists were also often unclear, leading to challenges in communication and effective work. Those most significantly affected by this divide do not feel that they have the support and/or resources to address these issues on their own.

Many noted a lack of clarity surrounding the decision-making processes (including the rationale for those decisions) within Western Libraries, resulting in decreased trust, confidence, and support for Library Management and their decisions. Many also noted that while committee work is important, the accountabilities of each committee are not always clear, often leading to lack of action and unresolved issues with no identifiable owner in terms of responsibility. This theme of lack of clear accountability was echoed at the individual level as well.

Differences in management styles are a normal part of any organization, but inconsistent management practices across the library system are affecting day-to-day operations and leading to confusion and islandization of units or groups.

Librarians/Archivists expressed a certain level of confusion as to what the 80-10-10 workload means, particularly as it related to Service and Academic Activity, leading to frustration or lack of engagement.

Interpersonal Relationships

Positive interpersonal relationships are critical to allowing people to work together in achieving a common goal. Positive work relationships enhance communication, minimize conflict, and improve employee satisfaction. Organizations that promote positive interpersonal relationships experience an increase in teamwork and organizational loyalty.

Interactions between individuals are generally polite and professional. However, due to the practice of conflict avoidance, the individual nature of much of the work, and the physical distance between individuals, there is minimal opportunity for ongoing informal communication that can enhance camaraderie and build positive relationships throughout the organization.

Corporate Culture

The corporate culture within an organization is the overall image of the organization, to both employees and clients. The reputation the organization develops determines employees' sense of belonging and fit within the organization. It can also affect the organization's interactions with clients, as well as with other organizations. When an organization builds a corporate culture of acceptance, professionalism, and achievement, employees are proud of the organization and contribute positively to the continued enhancement of the organization.

The culture of Western Libraries is one of uncertainty and careful anticipation. It is also a culture with a number of divisions – between Library Administration and Librarians/Archivists, between Librarians/Archivists and Library and Archival Assistants, and between various Libraries and locations across campus. The result is a workplace culture that lacks cohesion and vision. This makes it difficult for many people to accept innovation and change due to their lack of trust in the organization.

Most of the individuals interviewed in this assessment process expressed a sincere desire for engagement in determining and defining the current workplace culture as well as the future of Western Libraries. They reported that Library Management do not engage them on a regular basis nor in a meaningful manner, leading them to feel undervalued, misunderstood, and uncared for which, in turn, lessens their involvement and prevents them from providing creative solutions to the betterment of the organization.

Librarians' and Archivists' work has traditionally been structured according to bureaucratic requirements (e.g. time on the desk) and has emphasized responsibilities such as reference, cataloguing/arrangement, and collection development/accession. The current "faculty model" allows Members more autonomy in deciding how work is to be done and emphasizes Professional Practice,

Service, and Academic Activities. Because there is not an exact match between the work of Librarians and Archivists and that of faculty, this structure appears to cause confusion and/or distress for many of those interviewed. While some form of the faculty model may, in fact, be the appropriate structural model for this organization, it may require some sort of hybridization in order to fit; in any event, there is an urgent need for a general discussion of what constitutes Service and Academic Activity and the level of commitment to each that is expected.

Recommendations

The recommendations provided in this section address the main issues as outlined by CCR. In many cases, an individual recommendation will address several of the facets discussed in the “Results” section. Because implementing these recommendations is essential to developing and sustaining a healthy workplace climate, recommendations for implementation are also presented. The recommendations are structured in three parts: the recommendation itself, the actions required to bring the recommendation about, and optional ideas for implementation.

Recommendations, actions and ideas are listed in no particular order, i.e. they have not been prioritized.

1. Recommendation: To ensure all members of the workplace community have and understand the information they need to do their work, communication structures must be designed and implemented to facilitate engagement and awareness. All members of the workplace community must take responsibility for effective and respectful communication.

a. Action: Conduct a systematic review of communications needs, systems, and skills, including existing functioning of unit meetings and teams, and review how unit-level committees feed into system-wide structures. Audit the findings of the 2006 Western Libraries Committee Review Working Group, with a view to assessing communications structures of Western Libraries committees and working groups.

b. Action: Retain structures that are effective and develop new models as needed for more regular, productive and meaningful engagement.

c. Action: Maximize opportunities for formal and informal face-to-face communication so that dialogue can occur and questions can be asked and answered.

d. Action: Establish feedback loops and use them effectively and meaningfully.

e. Action: Establish a regular moderated forum (e.g., Town Hall or Libraries' and Archives' Council) including Librarians, Archivists, and Library Administration, for discussion of professional practice issues (e.g., recognition of work, discussion of work roles, information sharing, discussion of process, shared workplace concerns), leadership decisions and committee recommendations (e.g., budget process and feedback).

Ideas: Conduct a retreat focussed on communications needs, systems and skills.

2. Recommendation: Conflict in an organization is inevitable and can manifest itself in different ways, such as differences of opinion, in values, needs or expectations. When managed productively, conflict can be a catalyst for innovation and productivity. All members of the workplace community must develop and apply effective communication skills, particularly in conflict situations. This will establish a respectful and constructive environment, which encourages full participation and engagement by all.

a. Action: Assess training and coaching needs and provide development related to constructive communication skills, focusing on healthy engagement in conflict situations (e.g. where conflicting points of view are expressed; where difficult conversations are necessary).

b. Action: Implement measures for supporting committee chairs to develop and use effective communication skills to ensure full participation by all committee members.

c. Action: Specific consideration should be given in the Annual Report and Review process to the discussion of development and application of effective and respectful workplace communication.

Ideas: Communication training for those who have not received it; refresher courses and coaching support for the on-the-ground application of skills; training for Library Management and Committee Chairs in facilitation/mediation and meeting management; support mechanisms for Committee Chairs such as ongoing coaching and mentorship, co-chairing, stronger in-meeting facilitation role for committee sponsors. Recognize and reinforce effective communication skills.

3. Recommendation: To ensure a supportive and effective workplace environment, all members of the community must share the organizational vision, be active participants in the realization of the strategic goals, and understand the implementation plan and everyone's roles and responsibilities in achieving it. To achieve this, the vision for Western Libraries needs to be more clearly and regularly communicated throughout the organization. The plan for implementation needs to be collaboratively developed and implemented by Library Management and Librarians and Archivists generally.

a. Action: Conduct a facilitated leadership retreat for Library Administration to build team cohesion around goals, strategic plan and vision.

b. Action: Establish regular opportunities for face-to-face dialogue between Library Administration and Librarians and Archivists on the development of strategic and ongoing initiatives, including planning for and progress in implementation.

c. Action: Create an implementation plan for the strategic plan which includes metrics, timelines, stated accountabilities and plans for follow-up for each unit.

Ideas: Use a Town Hall setting to articulate the vision and aspirations for Western Libraries. Conduct facilitated forums for developing an implementation strategy for the Library Administration's vision and strategic goals.

4. Recommendation: To ensure that unit workload and individual planned activities are aligned with Western Libraries' strategic plan, that there is a shared understanding of the outcomes to be achieved, and that Members are committed to achieving outcomes which support the plan, all UWOFA-LA Members must be engaged in the Western Libraries planning process before unit workload and individual planned activities are developed.

a. Actions: Make unit workload plans available among UWOFA-LA colleagues.

b. Action: Provide meeting opportunities for all Members specifically related to the integration of strategic planning into unit workload plans and individual planned activities.

Ideas: Consider whether a new structure for unit workload and individual workload planning is necessary.

5. Recommendation: To increase staff confidence that their work is aligned with the strategic vision of Western Libraries and to increase staff engagement with this vision, Library Management must work together to discuss and implement appropriate practice for formal and informal recognition of individual work and accomplishments as well as the work and accomplishments of teams and/or committees.

a. Action: Library Managers need to regularly provide positive and constructive feedback, both in the formal Annual Report and Review process, and formally and informally throughout the year.

b. Action: Develop and share consistent practice around formal recognition opportunities (e.g. Promotion and Continuing Appointment, Academic Activity, and Service).

Ideas: Library Managers should be aware of and deliver the types of recognition that motivates members of their team. Seek resources of Learning and Development for coaching on delivering appropriate employee recognition.

6. Recommendation: To ensure greater consistency in management of people across Western Libraries, Library Managers must work together regularly to discuss management practices (including Collective Agreement provisions) and develop and implement common approaches across libraries.

a. Action: Engage Librarians, Archivists, and Library Administration in identifying areas where practices may vary, i.e. the Annual Report and Review process, assignment of work; for identified areas, develop a plan to achieve greater consistency of practice.

b. Action: Orient new incumbents to Library Management roles thoroughly to ensure role clarity and consistency.

c. Action: Clarify mechanisms for librarians to assign work to library assistants, as appropriate.

Ideas: Utilize university resources for clarity and guidance regarding collective agreement interpretations and practices or management practice.

7. Recommendation: To improve operational effectiveness of Western Libraries committees and ensure optimal use of Western Libraries resources, consistent practices need to be established and communicated for population of committees and for roles of committee members, chairs, and sponsors.

a. Action: Establish a working group to harmonize the existing practices, establish a pro forma for terms of reference that provides clear indication of reporting of committee, member roles and accountabilities, and decision making processes.

8. Recommendation: To provide clarity for Members regarding participation and assignment to UWOFA / UWOFA-LA committees, UWOFA leadership may wish to meet with UWOFA-LA Members and explain processes for population of various roles.

a. Action: Engage Librarians and Archivists in discussing the process and accountabilities for participation and assignment to UWOFA / UWOFA-LA committees.

9. Recommendation: To improve the bargaining process, UWOFA leadership may wish to explore areas of concern between UWOFA-LA Members and UWOFA-LA negotiating agents related to the bargaining process.

b. Action: Engage Librarians and Archivists in discussing the process and accountabilities for the negotiation process.

10. Recommendation: To increase shared understanding of workplace accountabilities and to ensure respect for all of the staff roles of Western Libraries, all library staff roles and responsibilities (Librarians/Archivists, Library Assistants, and Library Administration) need to be clearly defined and communicated across Western Libraries.

a. Action: Generate role descriptions and make them widely available within Western Libraries.

b. Action: Create and share a document that clearly identifies and defines the work and reporting structure of each library unit and committee.

Ideas: Develop opportunities for Librarians and Archivists to share information about their roles and responsibilities (e.g., three-minute thesis format).

11. Recommendation: Develop and communicate a shared understanding of what constitutes Service and Academic Activity.

a. Action: Utilize strategies identified under Actions in Recommendation 1, particularly Action 5e, to engage Librarians and Archivists on Service and Academic Activity responsibilities of Members.

12. Recommendation: Support success and ensure consistency in the Promotion and Continuing Appointment process.

a. Action: Clarify and communicate the Promotion and Continuing Appointment process and criteria, both for Committee members and for Librarians/Archivists.

b. Action: Coordinate regular sessions to support the Promotion and Continuing Appointment process and preparation of dossiers.

Idea: Provide individuals undergoing the process with regular feedback on the status of the consideration of their files.

13. Recommendation: Increase clarity of expectations of parties in the Annual Report and Review process and its relation to workload processes (e.g. Libraries Workload Committee Report and Unit Workload Plan) with a view to focusing on purpose and not just process.

a. Action: Deliver formal session(s) on development, implementation, and assessment of goals and objectives for Annual Report and Review.

b. Action: Enable system-wide discussions of broader library priorities to encourage wide participation in implementing strategic initiatives.

Idea: Library Management provide support of / assistance in workload reallocation to encourage participation in system-wide projects.

14. Recommendation: Provide support to Library Management to enable them to improve the workplace environment and to effectively facilitate change.

a. Action: Provide Executive Coaching for Library Administration focusing on workplace improvement. Provide Change Management course to Library Management with applied change project component.

Ideas: Find ways of recognizing innovation and encouraging flexibility and adaptability in the face of change.

Recommendation for Implementation and Oversight:

To ensure that the recommendations of the Joint Committee on Workplace Climate (JCWC) are acted upon with sufficient urgency, and to ensure accountability, an Implementation Committee should be formed.

a. Action: Establish an Implementation Committee to oversee the development and implementation of an action plan which addresses the approved recommendations of this report, including:

- specific actions for addressing the recommendations
- stated accountabilities, people responsible, and timelines
- milestones for measuring progress
- semi-annual reporting of progress to the Provost and UWOFA

In order to preserve continuity of knowledge acquired by the JCWC, the composition of the Implementation Committee should include all (or some) members of the JCWC. In addition, we recommend the inclusion of the University Librarian and a representative of the UWOFA Board of Directors.

Appendix A: Letter of Understanding “Workplace Climate”

Librarian and Archivist
Interim Sign-Off Article
September 20, 2011

LETTER OF UNDERSTANDING **Workplace Climate**

Between:

The University of Western Ontario
(hereafter referred to as the “Employer”)
and
The University of Western Ontario Faculty Association
(hereafter referred to as the “Association”)

This Letter of Understanding forms part of the Librarians and Archivists Collective Agreement (July 1, 2011-June 30, 2015) for the life of that Collective Agreement. The Parties agree that the Vice Provost (Academic Planning, Policy and Faculty) will convene a Joint Committee on Workplace Climate. The purpose of the Joint Committee will be to undertake a review of workplace climate issues pertaining to UWOFA-LA Members and the Employer, and to propose and implement agreed upon recommendations to improve the workplace climate for Western’s Librarians and Archivists. The Joint Committee shall consist of three persons representing the Employer and three Members representing the UWOFA-LA Bargaining Unit.

1. The Joint Committee shall be established within 60 days of the ratification of the 2011-2015 Collective Agreement.
2. Meetings of the Joint Committee shall be chaired by the Vice Provost (APPF), Director of Faculty Relations or Associate Vice-Provost.
3. The first meeting of the Joint Committee will establish the parameters and timelines for the committee’s work.
4. Included in the mandate of the Joint Committee will be the organization and facilitation of focus groups and individual interviews with UWOFA-LA Members, and others by invitation. Members will have the option to participate in one or both of these formats.
5. The focus groups and interviews will be conducted by a mutually agreed upon neutral external facilitator.
6. The facilitator will arrange for focus group and interview meetings to take place as soon as possible, but no later than March 31, 2012.

7. The facilitator will prepare a confidential report for the Joint Committee's review by April 30, 2012.
8. All Members are encouraged to participate; UWOFA-LA Members' confidentiality and anonymity shall be protected throughout this process.
9. The Committee shall consider any and all issues raised by Members pertaining to Workplace Climate, including, but not limited to, concerns related to annual performance evaluation and assessment and workload issues.
10. The Joint Committee will issue its report and recommendations by May 31, 2012 to UWOFA and the Provost.
11. The Employer will provide written acceptance of the report and recommendations, including implementation plans to UWOFA within one month of the Joint Committee report.
12. Implementation of these recommendations shall be overseen by the Vice Provost (APPF), the Director of Faculty Relations or Associate Vice Provost.
13. Deadlines may be altered by mutual consent of both parties.

Aniko Varpalotai, Chief Negotiator
The UWO Faculty Association

Jennifer King, Chief Negotiator
The University of Western Ontario

Date

Date